



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/607,089	06/26/2003	Liviu Marian	INTER-100	5424
7590	03/29/2004		EXAMINER	
Steven R. Bartholomew, Esq.			LAMB, BRENDA A	
63 Amberfield Road				
Trenton, NJ 08691-3639			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1734	

DATE MAILED: 03/29/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.	101607089	Applicant(s)	Marian
Examiner	LAMB	Group Art Unit	1734

—The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address—

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____
- This action is FINAL.
- Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under Ex parte Quayle, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- Claim(s) 1-2 is/are allowed.
- Claim(s) 3-7 is/are rejected.
- Claim(s) 3-7 is/are objected to.
- Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement

Application Papers

- The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is approved disapproved.
- The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner
- The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

- Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d).

All Some* None of the:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received
in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a))

*Certified copies not received: _____

Attachment(s)

- Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____
- Interview Summary, PTO-413
- Notice of Reference(s) Cited, PTO-892
- Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152
- Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948
- Other _____

Office Action Summary

Part of Paper No. _____

*U S GPO 2000-472-999/43204

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Layton et al 4,575,299 in view of Brightly, Jr.

Layton '299 teaches the design of a workstation having a row of processing tanks and an automatic work transfer system. Layton '299 teaches the automatic work transfer system includes a mass transfer hoist having a support rail 13 and a transfer hoist as shown in Figure 2, which rides on support rail 13. Layton '299 shows the transfer hoist having two vertical shaft (elements 17, 18) which support a beam 19 and beam 19, arranged parallel to the row of processing stages/tanks, has a sufficient length when moved can service all tanks. Layton '299 teaches the beam is provided thereon with a plurality of arms (22) with end effector (curve ends of arms 22) sufficient when moved to service all tanks and are actuated so as to position the arms with end effectors over the desired processing tank, Layton '297 teaches the automated work transfer system includes a first drive mechanism 42 to advance the transfer hoist along the supporting rail 13 to align the end effectors with the desired tank and second drive mechanism 41 to raise and lower the beam 19 along with vertical shafts 17, 18 as a result of movement of the elevator platform. Layton '299 fails to teach the workstation includes a plurality of baskets. However, it would have been obvious to modify the Layton '299 workstation so as to provide more than one basket such that each arm

supports an individual basket since Brightly, Jr. in Figure 7 shows a work basket designed to be supported by a single arm with end effector and obvious to do so to increase the numbers of articles which can be treated per immersion cycle. With respect to claim 2, Layton '299 teaches a guide rail 15 which is parallel to the supporting rail 4.

Claims 3-7 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brenda Lamb whose telephone number is (571) 272-1231. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Tuesday and Thursday thru Friday with alternate Wednesdays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Crispino can be reached on (571) 272-1226. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Brenda A. Lamb
BRENDA A. LAMB
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Lamb/LR
March 16, 2004